

HFMA West Midlands Branch Strategy 2021

1. Introduction

With a membership of around 500 the West Midlands Branch is one of the largest branches in the country, but this is still only a small percentage of the total finance staff across the West Midlands. Moving forward we need to consider how membership can be attractive to a wider representation of NHS finance colleagues and this strategy sets the themes to be developed.

The purpose of the branch is to:

- provide support to the network of finance professionals across the West Midlands.
- support the professional development of our membership by providing a learning and development programme for the region.
- disseminate best practice across the NHS in the West Midlands.

2. National Context

2.1. NHS and the national environment

Covid-19

The recent past has changed the way we work forever. The coronavirus pandemic has shifted working patterns to more remote working which has resulted in more professional isolation and the risk of reduced interaction between our membership. This has enhanced the need for a professional network across the region to provide a forum for membership to engage meaning as we move forward the need for an effective and relevant branch is greater than ever before. As we hopefully begin to exit from the pandemic it is unlikely that working practices will revert to what they were before so the strategy for the branch needs to respond to the changing needs of the finance community.

Integrated Care Systems

The development of Integrated Care Systems creates a greater focus on systems rather than individual organisations and the strategy of the branch needs to respond to this shift in focus. The HFMA holds a unique position providing engagement across all organisations in the NHS across the local system and can provide a network to share learning and best practice between member organisations. However, ICSs focus on the integration of health and care across the system and moving forward the branch strategy needs to consider how we better integrate finance colleagues across other partners such as Local Authorities and the third sector.

2.2. HFMA

The national HFMA Strategy determines the vision, mission and values for the HFMA:

Vision: better quality health and social care through the effective use of resources

Mission: represent and support health and social care professionals through the influencing of health and social policy, promoting best practice and providing high quality continuing professional development and education

Values: High Quality – excellence, continuous improvement, innovation and professionalism.

Fair – do the right thing, be honest, open and independent.

Member focused – put members at the heart of everything we do.

Accessible – friendly, caring supportive and collaborative.

The branch strategy needs to complement the national strategy, but it has been agreed locally that the national strategy should not necessarily shape the local strategy and the core aim of the local strategy is supporting and representing members and professionals in the West Midlands.

3. Developing the Strategy

The refresh of this strategy commenced with an inclusive away day in January 2020. This facilitated session provided an opportunity for committee members and wider representation of the West Midlands to consider the focus of the West Midlands Branch, the process for developing a strategy and the key themes that should be considered.

It was agreed that the strategy for the branch is not a document or a meeting but is a process that engages our full membership and should be a platform to promote engagement. As such, this strategy document should be viewed as a focus for discussion with all membership.

A wide range of topics were discussed at the away day with themes considered including membership support, mentoring and coaching, support, learning, visibility, diversity, environmental sustainability and skills development.

4. Key Themes

The West Midlands branch strategy considers eight key themes.

4.1. Enhancing the Brand

HFMA should be the first point of contact for our membership when looking for support, information or training resources so we will work closely with the national communications and engagement team to enhance the HFMA brand across the West Midlands ensuring that the resources available support our membership and value in the delivery of their core responsibilities.

4.2. Supporting Members

The core purpose of the branch is to support our membership. Looking forward the branch is committed to increasing membership numbers by engaging with a wider population and providing relevant and useful suite of services to the finance community of the West Midlands.

Current statistics demonstrate that the branch is accessed by students and senior finance professionals but has limited engagement with the wider finance community working at middle grades across the West Midlands. The branch will develop its offering to members making the benefits of membership more relevant to the wider community:

- Visibility and relevance of events.
- Stronger links with Future Focused Finance.
- Access to mentoring and coaching across the West Midlands.
- Enhanced communication and dissemination of relevant learning.
- Greater on-line presence including information resources, chat rooms, active social media presence.
- Social events both physical and virtual.

With increased home working, the risk of isolation increases and the HFMA is committed to supporting our members to develop resilience and to provide forums and networks to enhance professional and social engagement and inclusion.

One NHS Finance is a nationwide conversation to give everyone working in the finance community the opportunity to share current challenges and input into how we shape the future of the function. In the Midlands and nationally the HFMA are committed to supporting the development and delivery of the vision and values of One NHS Finance. Three key themes have been developed:

- Developing Our People - ensuring that all finance colleagues are valued, given the right support within an inclusive culture and have opportunities to develop their careers in NHS Finance to realise their potential
- Developing Our Community - working together across boundaries to create a community of practice where people can learn from each other and collectively improve, making NHS Finance an attractive, meaningful and rewarding place to work
- Developing Our Systems and Processes - striving for greater consistency and standardisation across processes and systems to support them to do their jobs efficiently, effectively and to the best of their abilities so we can offer the best possible value for money
- Supporting the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) agenda

More information on One NHS Finance can be found at www.onenhsfinance.org.uk

4.3. Supporting Integration

The future of health and care is integration and the HFMA West Midlands Branch will play a key role in bringing together the different organisations. Linking with ICS finance leads we will provide forums and resources within the ICS and between systems to share and disseminate lessons learnt and best practice.

We will strive to have representatives from all Integrated Care Systems on the committee.

Traditionally the HFMA have focused on NHS partners but the development of Integrated Care Systems highlights the importance of developing networks across the whole care infrastructure. The West Midlands Branch is committed to representing and engaging with finance colleagues from across the whole system and will develop its resources and offerings to work more closely with colleagues in Local Authorities and the third sector. We will work with the national HFMA to develop a membership package that would be attractive to Non-NHS staff.

Learning events and conferences need to reflect the environment that we work within so future programmes will be enhanced to respond to the needs of Integrated Care Systems.

4.4. Clinical and non-financial engagement

The relationship between finance colleagues and the rest of the organisation is crucial. Appropriate engagement with clinical colleagues at the right time delivers enhanced understanding of the financial consequences of decisions and a greater ownership by the wider organisation of the finance agenda. Conversely, a better understanding of services by the finance team results in improved support to the operation of the organisation and a more supportive financial function.

A key element of the strategy moving forward is enhancing the engagement between finance and non-finance colleagues and will be delivered through a number of channels:

- Providing support to non-finance colleagues on understanding financial information.
- Supporting members on how to better engage with services.
- Development of finance as business support colleagues.
- Delivery of integrated events bringing finance and non-finance colleagues together.

4.5. Holding the System Together

A key element of the HFMA is providing a network across the West Midlands for finance colleagues. Operating outside business objectives the branch will provide a forum to bring our membership together supporting the whole care system. We will provide support to members within Integrated Care Systems and between systems across the whole of the West Midlands.

The branch already provides regular Director of Finance meetings but moving forward will look how we can enhance our role in bringing people together through the development of similar forums for other staff grades, through the enhancement of our digital offer via on line chat rooms, topic focused forums and information resources.

4.6. Equality, Diversions and Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion are highlighted across the NHS as an important area of improvement and the HFMA is committed to supporting its members to integrate diversity into all working practices across the region. We will work with the national HFMA to develop policies and promote diversity in all areas of the NHS with a particular focus on BAME and support to women throughout the finance function.

4.7. Future Governance

Success of the regional committee depends on its relevance to members and its ability to add value to membership. We are committed to enhancing the role of the committee and ensuring that it is more accessible to the wider membership across the West Midlands.

A review of the governance of the committee will be undertaken to ensure that we are delivering the best service to our membership ensuring that all systems in the West Midlands are represented, that the agenda moving forward is open and transparent and that our membership feels it can contribute effectively to the running of the business of the branch.

4.8. Digital

The branch is committed to the use of digital innovations to better engage with the membership and support the region. We will work in partnership with the national team to enhance the digital offering to our membership and extend the digital resources available.

- Use of other media such as You Tube to provide interactive resources including virtual newsletters, podcasts, access to historical training and conferences.
- Extensive document storage to support our membership in the delivery of their responsibilities
- Provision of resources to support mentoring and personal development.